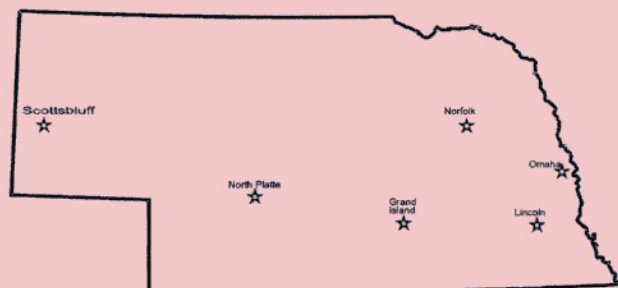


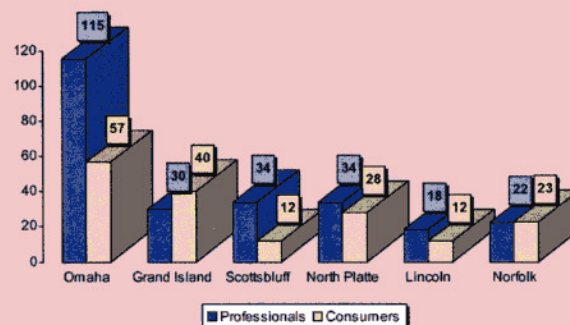
Locations of Real Choice Nebraska Town Hall Meetings

Eight Real Choice Town Hall meetings were held in six communities across Nebraska.



Who Attended?

A total of 415 individuals participated in the eight Town Hall meetings that were held across the state in six communities. Forty-one percent (41%) or 172 of the 415 participants were consumers or family members of consumers.



Participants' Feedback. . . What Can I Do Now To Implement Consumer-Directed Services?

Participants were asked what they could do now to implement consumer-directed services, without any systems changes. Here is a sample of actions that participants identified:

- Develop informal community networks and develop information resources.
- Improve consumer knowledge and citizen advocacy.
- Have consumers in leadership roles on agency governing boards.
- Conduct training on consumer-directed principles for providers, consumers and services coordinators.
- Support consumers in directing their own services.
- Listen to and act on consumers' requests and priorities.
- Promote the consumer as being a valued member of the community.
- Improve coordination of services across all agencies through effective teamwork.

"An individual has a responsibility to participate in the process up to their capacity."

Participants' Feedback. . . What Are The Barriers To Consumer-Directed Services?

We asked community participants to identify what they thought were the greatest barriers to consumer-directed services. Participants generated a list of barriers and prioritized these at each Town Hall meeting. Summaries of the top five barriers that received the most votes are listed below. Quotes from participants further clarify these issues.

Limited Services / Resources

- Limited options for meaningful day services
- High caseloads of Services Coordinators
- Access to services based in crisis situations are limited - a focus on prevention measures should be considered
- Waiting lists are a barrier
- Geographic boundaries limit and hinder access to services
- Lack of accessible housing
- Need for day-center programs
- Improved transportation options

"Capacity building in rural areas will be important. It will be important to think outside the box and be flexible in encouraging the best use of existing resources."

Need for Information & Referral

- Need "one big book" of resources
- Need well-informed services coordinators
- Need consumers to be knowledgeable of available services
- Need easy and timely access to consistent, reliable information

"Information and referral is a very powerful service. Information is power."

Changes to Rules / Regulations

- Rules and regulations are too restrictive and limit choices
- Rules and regulations need to be streamlined
- Funding sources drive services and create policy constraints; the consumers' needs should drive policies, and therefore, services
- Need clarification related to liability/risk
- Funding should be tied to a person's needs

"There is too much red tape which prevents providers from doing what consumers want." "The idea that disabilities are separate and distinct is a barrier."

Lack of Flexibility of Funding / Services

- Funding needs to follow the person
- Need to review the current allocation of resources
- Need more flexibility in service options
- Services that are accessible and flexible

"One size fits all? It doesn't work that way." "Choice must be real, not conceptual. There must be a range of services in the community."

Need Improved Processes

- Lack of coordinated services
- ICAP assessment process is burdensome
- Planning should be based on consumers' strengths
- Transition services need to be smoother (Adolescent-Adult services)
- Lack of communication between agencies
- Need more employment options for consumers

"Ask the question, 'What would it take to make you more independent?'" "There should be one set of forms, one services coordinator, one contact person for the consumer."